

**THE NAVAJO
INDIANS; A
STATEMENT OF FACTS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649753475

The Navajo Indians; a statement of facts by Anselm Weber

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ANSELM WEBER

**THE NAVAJO
INDIANS; A
STATEMENT OF FACTS**

GIPY
SEP 13 1915

THE
NAVAJO INDIANS

A
STATEMENT
OF FACTS

—BY—



(REV.) ANSELM WEBER, O. F. M.,
ST. MICHAELS, ARIZONA

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
SAN DIEGO

THE NAVAJO INDIANS.

For several years past there has been agitated the question of allotting lands in Arizona and New Mexico to the Navajo and other Indians and throwing open to settlement and entry under the public land laws the unallotted balance of lands now embraced in Indian reservations. The cry has been loud that these reservations are too large and are not needed by the Indians. Unfortunately some members of the Delegations from these States have appeared to be influenced by exaggerated and untrue statements upon this question, and as the Indians are absolutely dependent upon the Federal Government for their rights, I have tried hereinafter to show why these reservations should not be reduced in area.

Congress, as a whole, is responsible for the Indian policy and may not conscientiously shift responsibility to Delegations from States in which the Indians in question live. Is not the Nation, as such, through its representatives, responsible for the wards of the Nation? May I not truthfully say some Members of Congress represent constituencies or rather some active, aggressive constituents who are enemies of the Indians and their welfare? THEY have responsive representatives in Congress in such cases; but who represents the Indians? Without a vote, placed under Federal jurisdiction, he is not a part of the State "constituency"; he is often fought by the constituency and its representatives. The Indian has no representation unless Congress as a whole espouses his cause. Too often, however, Congress as a body relies implicitly upon the Delegation from such States for information, guidance and action, and such Delegations are, at times, misinformed by interested constituents. I am stating the case as mildly as possible.

A CASE IN POINT

is found in the Congressional Record of June 17, 1913, pages 2317-2321: "Within three months the Indian Department has located 37 renegade Navajos in Socorro County, New Mexico, 250 miles from the Navajo Reservation, where they have unallotted 12,211,300 acres."

Not 250 miles, but 54 miles, as the bird flies, from the Navajo Reservation.

"Including the Navajos who are off the reserve and the Navajos who are not, there are 1,100 acres to every Navajo, man, woman and child."

This is a simple question of census, acreage and arithmetic. According to the Census of 1910 the Navajo tribe numbers 2,455 people. To my own personal knowledge a large number

of Navajos were not enumerated in that census; but let us accept the figure of the last census. Let us also assume 12,000,000 acres as constituting the Navajo Treaty Reservation and the various Executive Order Reservations, and a simple example of arithmetic will show that, instead of 1,100 acres, each member of the tribe would have but 534 acres.

However, to be more accurate: The Navajo Reservation embraces 11,887,793 acres, of which approximately 719,360 acres belong to the Santa Fe Pacific Railroad Company, and approximately 55,400 acres to the State of Arizona, leaving 11,113,033 acres. Consequently, if you take the very conservative figure of 25,000 Navajos and 11,113,033 acres really belonging to them, you would have 444 acres to the person.

"These 137 Indians (of Socorro County) happen to represent the renegades of the tribe, who would not stay home and work, but have been leading a nomadic life for several years in the mountains of New Mexico, existing by fishing and stealing. Those are the Indians who have been located among the citizens who are compelled to pay the taxes."

It is true, some of these 137 Navajos are renegades, or rather descendants of renegades, but in a peculiar acceptance of the word. The Navajos call them "Dine Ana'i," i. e., "Navajo enemies." Years ago, before the Navajos were subdued and taken to Fort Sumner, in 1862, when raids between Mexicans and Navajos were of frequent occurrence and about 1,500 Navajos were held captives by the Mexicans, the Mexicans employed "renegade Navajos," "Dine Ana'i," as their guides in raiding the Navajos; some of those 137 are descendants of such, and the Navajos would not care to receive them on the reservation.

"For several years in the mountains." Why, many of them have been born right there in Socorro County; at any rate, I have a paper before me, dated June 23, 1894, written by the Archbishop of Santa Fe, signed by forty-three persons of Socorro County, testifying to the good character and good intentions of these Navajos of Socorro County. Furthermore, the records of the Santa Fe Land Office show that settlement was made by some of these Indians in 1870, and homestead entries in 1883 and 1888. As early as 1886 Judge McComas of Albuquerque tried to dispossess the Navajo, David Torres, claiming the land to be coal land.

"Existing by fishing and stealing."

They have small herds of sheep and goats and work as herdsmen for the Mexicans. The records of the District Court for Socorro County for the last fifteen years does not show that any Navajo was indicted for any crime during that period. Fishing! I doubt if there is a live fish within fifty miles of their habitat. Besides, fish are tabooed by the Navajos. Organize a fish

brigade, armed with fishes tied to switches, and you can drive the Navajos residing off the reservation back to the reservation much easier than with several regiments of soldiers equipped with modern firearms.

"I want to say to the Senator (Bristow) that possibly he does not understand the conditions as they exist in our country. Possibly he is not aware of the fact that every year, two or three times a year, these Indians are allowed to go from their immensely rich reserves to interfere with white men, American citizens, on the public domain, causing the killing of anywhere from one to a dozen people. This is an unfortunate condition of affairs. I can say to the Senator that we people down in our section of the country can deal with these conditions if we are compelled to; but this sometimes becomes a question of all a man has—of his property rights, of protection to his family and his children. Any white man, any American citizen, will then use such force as is necessary in protecting his family. All that we seek to do is to restrict the further location of these Indians upon the public domain until Congress can act again. The committee is being appointed, and I presume this matter will be investigated. It has been investigated before, and reports made, and no action taken. But this must cease; it must stop; and I tell the Senator from Kansas that it will stop."—(Congressional Record, June 17, 1913, page 2320.)

I regret that a Senator made this statement. I have been among the Navajos for sixteen years, and I know of not one single instance where a white man was killed on account of Navajos leaving the reservation, or on account of any grazing or land disputes. If every year the killing of from one to a dozen is occasioned by Navajos leaving their reserve, how is it that no one knows anything about it?

Furthermore, is it true that every year two or three times a year, these Indians are allowed to go from their immensely rich (?) reserves to interfere with white men? Navajos living on the very border of the reservation naturally graze their flocks on and off the reservation. (The reservation line is, as a rule, not known to them.) But Indians who live and have their range within the reservation do NOT leave it. When the small treaty reservation of 3,225,600 acres was created, in 1868, the Navajos returned from their Babylonian captivity to the homes they had occupied before their abduction to Fort Sumner; they did not leave the reservation; they had never been on the reservation. At a recent council with Indians off the reservation, 193 heads of families attending, each one was asked and each one asserted most emphatically that he had never lived on the reservation and had never ranged his stock thereon.

One more quotation: "In 1893 * * * a board of army officers, under a resolution of Congress and by direction of the Secretary of the Interior, made a thorough examination of the entire Navajo reserve. They made a voluminous report, which was transmitted to this body and to the other House, in which it was shown that with the expenditure of \$65,000 additional to the amount of \$20,000 which they then had on hand, a total of \$85,000, the Navajo Reservation could be placed in a condition, by the opening of water holes and the development of small streams of water, so that it would amply support every Navajo Indian, man, woman and child, on or off the reserve, and that the 9,000 off the reserve could be taken back to the reserve where they belonged and no longer interfere with the citizens living on the public domain. Congress refused to act; it refused even to appropriate \$65,000 for the purpose reported by this board of army engineers. The fault, therefore, lies, to some extent, with Congress."—(Congressional Record, June 17, 1913, page 2317.)

No, Congress did NOT refuse to act. The following year Congress DID appropriate \$60,000 for that purpose. What became of the money? Ask Mr. Vincent. What became of the subsequent appropriations for development of water? Ask the respective Superintendents of Irrigation. Very little water has been developed by the Government—the suggestions of those army engineers have been carried out to a very, very limited extent. This report has been repeatedly referred to. I have a copy before me. It shows how conditions were then, twenty-two years ago. On page 28, the Hon. Commissioner of Indian Affairs, J. T. Morgan, writes: "The relations between the Navajo Indians of New Mexico, Arizona and Utah and their white neighbors have been much strained for some time. The Navajos, on account of lack of water and grass on their reservation, located in the Territories named, have been forced to go beyond its boundaries to sustain their flocks and herds. * * * In a letter dated July 16, 1892, Gen. Alex. McD. McCook, U. S. Army, commanding the Department of Arizona, in reference to the condition of affairs on the Navajo Reservation, submitted for my consideration certain recommendations based upon what he deemed an immediate necessity, with a view to settling the differences between the Navajos and the whites upon the borders of their reservation, with a statement that it was reported by the Navajo Agent that 9,000 of these Indians were without the limits of the reservation from necessity; that they had large flocks and herds; that there was no water or grass within the official limits of the reservation to maintain them, and give sufficient water even for limited agricultural purposes to the 18,000 Indians said to constitute the Navajo Nation. * * * The General stated in his said letter that it would, in his judgment,

be inhuman to drive the Navajo Indians, with their large flocks and herds, back to the reservation as it now is."

And on page 50, he states: "Should the appropriation be made and the water developed and irrigation established as proposed, it is believed that the roving, non-reservation Navajos could be returned to the reservation and induced to remain thereon, and that the reservation Indians themselves could be restrained from going beyond the official limits of their reservation for the purpose of securing water and grass for their flocks and herds."

I wish to call attention to the fact that this statement embodies only the opinion of the then Indian Commissioner. Nowhere in their report do the army engineers make any similar statement. But let that pass.

The appropriation was made; water was NOT developed and irrigation, as proposed, was not established to a very appreciable extent. Even if, at present, all the recommendations of said army engineers were carried out, the same conclusion could not be reached now, after twenty-two years; or is it reasonable to assume that conditions now are the same as twenty-two years ago? Since that time the Navajos have increased by seven or eight thousand, and their stock has more than doubled.

OPENING OF THE NAVAJO RESERVATION FOR SETTLEMENT.

In discussing this question, the character of the country and its capacity to carry a certain number of stock and to support a certain number of people must be taken into consideration; also the number of stock and the number of people it is actually supporting now.

According to the Census of 1910, our

APACHE COUNTY

has a population of 9,196 on its 11,379 square miles, i. e., 0.8 of a person to the square mile. How does the Indian population compare with the white (American, Mormon and Mexican) population in this county? Whilst the 5,247 square miles of the Navajo Reservation support 5,687 Navajos, i. e., 1 person to the square mile, the rest of the county, 6,132 square miles, supports but 3,510 (whites and Indians), i. e., 0.6 of a person to the square mile. Furthermore, in the townships south of the reservation, occupied by whites and Indians, the population averages one person to the square mile, but the portion occupied exclusively by whites averages but 0.5 of a person to the square mile; hence the "Indian country" supports just twice as many people as the

"white country" in the same county. Then, why should the Indian country be opened to settlement, since it is settled already doubly as densely as the white country? Practically every Navajo is a stock raiser, though he may practice, in addition and on a small scale, dry farming and farming by irrigation where it is feasible, but, of the 3,510 whites of Apache County, 1,929, i. e., more than half, live in the towns of St. Johns, Concho, Egertown and Springerville; that leaves 0.3 of a person per square mile. What per cent of these town people are stockmen, I do not know. After enumerating the population in four towns, twenty-two townships and the reservations, the census bulletin states: "Remainder of county 392." Exempting the four townships in which the four towns are situated, that "remainder" comprises 3,288 square miles, i. e., 0.1 of a person to the square mile. If the 5,686 Navajos on the reservation in Apache County could be removed as by magic, how many stockmen would that country support? Where over a thousand Navajo families make a living at present, possibly a few dozen absentee cattle and sheep men would enrich themselves. But the Navajos cannot be brushed aside by a magic wand. To open the door to these cattle and sheep men would ruin an already overcrowded range and ruin the Navajos besides. When the rest of Apache County is as thickly settled as the Navajo Reservation, it will be time enough to consider the opening thereof.

NAVAJO COUNTY

with its area of 10,300 square miles and its 11,471 people, numbers 1.1 person to the square mile. The Navajo and Moqui reservations, with an area of 4,662 square miles and an Indian population of 4,371, numbers 1 person to the square mile; on the Apache Reservation 1.3 persons to the square mile, and off these reservations 1.2 persons to the square mile; but if you deduct the population of the railroad town of Winslow, with its 2,381 inhabitants (not to mention Holbrook, numbering 609 inhabitants), you have only 0.7 of a person to the square mile, as compared to 1 person to the square mile on the reservation. Within this county is the so-called

BUTTE COUNTRY,

east of the Leupp, west of the Navajo, and south of the Moqui Reservation, a tract of land 24 by 39 miles, which, on May 13, 1908, was withdrawn from sale and settlement for allotting purposes. The 523 allotments, made in 1908 and 1909, are not yet approved. The odd numbered sections in the west half of this tract belong to the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway Company, whilst the odd numbered sections on the east half belong